

Security Awareness and Reporting of Foreign Contacts

Presidential Decision Directive PDD/NSC-12

05 August 1993

Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-12 requires that government employees report all contacts with individuals of any nationality, either within or outside the scope of the employee's official activities, in which:

- Illegal or unauthorized access is sought to classified or otherwise sensitive information.
- The employee is concerned that he/she may be the target of actual or attempted exploitation by a foreign entity.

Government employees must immediately report any discussion in which someone asks them to provide sensitive information which they are not authorized to receive. If in doubt, the agency Security Office has or knows personnel that are available to assess information and determine if a potential counterintelligence threat exists.

Contractors are required to report efforts by any individual, regardless of nationality, to obtain illegal or unauthorized access to classified information or to compromise a cleared employee. In addition, all contacts by cleared employees with known or suspected intelligence officers from any country, or any contact which suggests the employee concerned may be the target of an attempted exploitation by the intelligence services of another country shall be reported.

The mainstay of most intelligence services the world over is the recruitment of well-placed assets who can provide insightful intelligence on a particular issue(s). As the leading superpower, the United States is, and will continue to be, the prime focus of most foreign intelligence services. Those employed in America's most sensitive jobs are of special interest to other nation's intelligence services, especially civilian employees, military assignees, and government contractors.

Despite the number of Americans who have initiated their own espionage careers and have volunteered, foreign intelligence services, nevertheless, continue to invest considerable time and resources in assessing and targeting US citizens for recruitment approaches. Furthermore, recruitment approaches are almost never made out-of-the-blue, but are actually the end result of detailed planning and thorough assessment of the target. By the time a target is asked to work for an intelligence service, the individual is probably aware that a dubious relationship is developing.

Contact the USDA Personnel and Document Security Division, 202-720-7373, if you have any questions about this Directive.